

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (currently amended) A method for detecting presence of microorganisms in a sample, comprising the steps of:

(a) preparing a container comprising a medium portion which has a fluid culture medium for supporting growth of microorganisms and a fluid indicator isolated from the medium portion which contains a color changing CO<sub>2</sub> indicator for detecting the presence of microorganisms;

(b) wherein said fluid indicator portion is isolated from said medium portion by a CO<sub>2</sub> gas-permeable membrane, which permeates CO<sub>2</sub> gas at a pressure required to maintain a density of CO<sub>2</sub> gas at a level required for growth of a microorganism;

(c) mixing a sample in said fluid culture medium;

(d) sealing said container entirely from outside atmosphere; and

(e) indicating the presence of microorganisms by determining a color change of said CO<sub>2</sub> indicator.

2. (currently amended) A method for identifying quantities of microorganisms in a sample, comprising the steps of:

(a) preparing a container comprising a medium portion which has a fluid culture medium for supporting growth of microorganisms and a fluid indicator isolated from the medium portion which contains a color changing CO<sub>2</sub> indicator for detecting the presence of microorganisms;

(b) wherein said fluid indicator portion is isolated from said medium portion by a CO<sub>2</sub> gas-permeable membrane, which permeates CO<sub>2</sub> gas at a pressure required to maintain a density of CO<sub>2</sub> gas at a level required for growth of a microorganism;

(c) mixing a sample in said fluid culture medium;

(d) sealing said container entirely from outside atmosphere;

(e) measuring time, starting from a moment when said container is sealed until a moment when color of said CO<sub>2</sub> indicator is turned into a predetermined color; and

(f) identifying initial quantities of microorganisms obtained by comparing measured time against contents of a table which holds pre-collected time data on each microorganism species of known initial quantities in known amount of sample.

3 - 6. (canceled)

7. (currently amended) A method for identifying quantities of microorganisms in a sample, comprising the steps of:

(a) preparing a container comprising a medium portion which has a fluid culture medium for supporting growth of microorganisms and an indicator isolated from the medium portion

which contains a color changing CO<sub>2</sub> indicator for detecting the presence of microorganisms;

(b) wherein said indicator portion is isolated from said medium portion by a CO<sub>2</sub> gas-permeable membrane, which permeates CO<sub>2</sub> gas at a pressure required to maintain a density of CO<sub>2</sub> gas at a level required for growth of a microorganism;

(c) mixing a sample in said fluid culture medium;

(d) sealing said container entirely from outside atmosphere;

(e) measuring time, starting from a moment when said container is sealed until a moment when color of said CO<sub>2</sub> indicator is turned into a predetermined color; and

(f) identifying initial quantities of microorganisms obtained by comparing measured time against contents of a table which holds pre-collected time data on each microorganism species of known initial quantities in known amount of sample.